

Research Committee Meeting
Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2020
Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30pm
Location: **Webex Meeting**

Present

David Armenti (commissioner)
Simone Barret (commissioner)
Charles Chavis (commissioner)
Elgin Klugh (commissioner)
Maya Davis (MD State Archives Staff)
Chris Haley (MD State Archives Staff)
Linda Duyer (Public observer)
Lawrence Roberts (Public observer)

MINUTES

This meeting was called primarily as a check-in to make sure that committee members understand the overall research strategy and process.

Baseline Data and Google Drive

The baseline data to be collected for each incident was approved in the last full commission meeting. As such, commissioners assigned to each region will be primarily responsible for the gathering of this information for related cases. Commissioners may work with others (outside of the commission) based on expertise and abilities but are primarily responsible for collating information and uploading it to the Google Drive.

GMU student researchers are currently assisting in the discovery of newspaper reporting on each event of lynching.

Chavis noted that materials at the state archives site only list the resources available at the archives. The students are putting together a more exhaustive list of primary source materials.

Letters

Letter to be sent to Historical Societies – suggested as email

Chavis has sent a letter to the Shriver Center at UMBC (Michelle Wolf, Director)
Letter has gone to the Virginia MLK Commission
Letter has gone to Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS)

Discussion of Website

Davis – noted that we have flexibility in how to display information for the public (Does not have to follow the model of the Judge Lynches Court website)

Chavis suggested the University of Maryland African American Digital Humanities Project as a possible resource (maybe an opportunity for funding / design help / different maps / GIS technology to be able to display the narratives in a creative way)

State Archives will host the website in perpetuity.

Copyrights

Chavis brought up the issue of copyrights. Sites like Newspapers.com have a pay wall for information (noted that we should be ok on information before 1923).

Is it ok for us to display the newspaper clipping that are retrieved from newspapers.com (even some from Baltimore German newspapers)? We may need to consult with our attorney before eventually displaying materials on the website.

Maryland Historical Society

Will work with the State Archives to get some content (pictures, documents, recordings) on the State Archives web site.

The society has papers from Gov. Ritchie, also the Paul Henderson (Afro photographer) collection, also some oral history, audio with Clarence Mitchell, Asbury Smith -some materials online and some are not – will need to navigate what can be placed online

Armenti asked that we let him know what we have find that is in the MdHS collection so that he can summarize that with their library director.

Armenti reported that he asked a fellow working with MdHS – UMBC Masters in Historical Studies program candidate, Bria Warren – to assist in work because her thesis is actually focusing on these topics and media representation

NMAAHC

Chavis noted that the NMAAHC lynching exhibit has a donated item from the Henderson estate (a piece of the rope – and a letter – he was a photojournalist who was there the day after the lynching. And was also present at the grand jury hearing.)

The Afro

Noted the need to partner with the Afro – they covered MD lynchings more than anyone else (Savannah Woods, archivist)

The Baltimore Sun

Perhaps also a partnership with the Baltimore Sun needs to be established

Somerset County

Linda Dyer reported that she created a website: Somersetlynching.wordpress.com

Covers 4 lynching victims and pages on near lynching

On the George Armwood page – has included the Johnny Robbins private papers and a series of statements from the police officers and others, and correspondence between Robbins and William Preston Lane

Other items:

- * Put local coalitions list in our google drive
- * Chavis noted Dean Heron, Chief historian for the African American Historical Commission for Frederick County, and a report that he wrote about lynching in Fredrick County
- * Do the archives have the Johnny Robbins (State Attorney) private papers?
- * Note – a better time in the future may be early afternoon (if on Friday).